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Senate

The Senate met at 3 p.m. and was called to order by the Honorable MARIA CANTWELL, a Senator from the State of Washington.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer.

Let us pray.

O God, our Father, we wait to serve You as You desire. Make us alert to the needs of those lives You seek to touch. Lead us to opportunities to transform hurting people, bringing relief to captives and comfort to the oppressed.

Empower Your Senators in this endeavor. Use them as ambassadors of reconciliation. Give them such winsome dispositions that they will bless even those who are hard of heart and withered in spirit. May they comfort those who are brought low by sorrow, and lift those who are bowed by life's burden. Use them to inspire those who walk through the valley of shadows.

We pray in Your precious Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable MARIA CANTWELL led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. BYRD).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, October 29, 2007.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable MARIA CANTWELL, a Senator from the State of Washington, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

Ms. CANTWELL thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Madam President, the Senate will be in a period of morning business for 90 minutes, with the first hour under the control of Senator BOXER and the remaining 30 minutes under the control of the Republicans.

Following morning business, the Senate will resume consideration of the Amtrak legislation. While no rollcall votes will occur today, Members should be here to offer amendments, if they have any, to this legislation.

As a reminder, a bipartisan cloture motion was filed on the Amtrak legislation. Members should file all germane amendments by 3:30 today.

MEASURE PLACED ON CALENDAR—S. 2247

Mr. REID. Madam President, I understand that S. 2247 is at the desk and is due for a second reading.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will read the title of the bill for the second time.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2247) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make permanent the depreciation classification of motorsports entertainment complexes.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I object to any further proceedings with respect to this legislation.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection is heard. The bill will be placed on the calendar.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that my remarks not count against the time of Senator BOXER or the Republicans.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PASSING THE ENERGY BILL

Mr. REID. Madam President, last night, temperatures fell in many parts of the east coast and, frankly, even the west coast has been getting cold. It was cold in Searchlight. I talked to my brother this morning and he had to start his fire. Searchlight is much colder than Las Vegas. In parts of northern Nevada, it has been very cold.

All over America, and this morning in the DC area, for the first time this year, people had to reach into their closets for scarves, heavier suits, and even coats for the first time this season. In other parts of the country, there have been colder days earlier. In DC, this is the first one we have gotten.

In Las Vegas, even though it still reaches the high 80s during the day this time of year, even now you can feel an overnight chill in the air. There are parts of Nevada that are really cold. We have had freezing weather in Ely and Elko already this year.

As the temperature falls all over the country, we begin to think about the cost of heating our homes for the winter. That cost has risen steadily during the 7 years of the Bush administration, and we have become even more dependent on fossil fuel.

This morning, as our thoughts turned toward the cold months ahead, the price of oil rose to an all-time record of \$93 a barrel. If we don't turn the tide by

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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reducing our dependence on oil and foreign energy sources, every American will be forced to pay more and more to heat our homes and fill our gas tanks.

I went over to my office in the Hart building today. I don't get over there as much as I would like, but I went around and talked to everybody. I have a wonderful employee who has been with me for many years. Her name is Carrie. She lives in Mechanicsville, MD. When the rain hit, it took her 3 hours to get to work and 2½ hours to get home. On a normal day, it takes an hour and a half. She sold her vehicle she loved so much, which was a Chevrolet Tahoe. It would cost her \$40 every 2 days for gasoline. She bought a smaller car, and her cost for fuel has dropped significantly. Not just Carrie, but everybody in the country is more aware of the cost of energy. Whether it is for their vehicles or whether it is for their homes, the cost of oil is significant.

We are addicted to oil. That is not just me saying that. Even President Bush said it—even though I think he hasn't done anything about it. He acknowledged we are addicted to oil. I have said on the floor time and again, and I will say it again today: Today in America, we will burn 21 million barrels of oil. Tomorrow, we will use the same; the day after, the same. It is not going down, it is going up. We use 21 million barrels of oil a day. That is almost 3 gallons for every man, woman, and child in our country every day. That is enough oil, every day, to fill a swimming pool, or an oil pool, 10 feet deep, the length and width of 200 football fields—every day. How does the Earth have that much oil? But it does.

Day after day, we consume oil at twice the rate of any other industrialized nation. Our consumption only continues to go up. This oil addiction has become a three-pronged crisis: It does threaten our economy, no question about that. Look what it has done to our environment. It is threatening our national security.

A 10-percent increase in oil prices costs an estimated 150,000 Americans jobs and more than \$100 billion of American dollars.

Since 2001, oil prices have risen by more than 230 percent. So clearly these impacts are real and harmful to working families.

Those hard-working, hard-earned American dollars are coming out of the pockets of families, and where is it going? Overseas. Last year, Americans sent almost \$300 billion to foreign countries to pay for imported oil. I am not stretching the truth to say that many of those dollars went to governments that don't have our foreign policy interests at heart.

Meanwhile, the world's leading scientists have reached a consensus that the global warming crisis is real, grave, and it is growing. The Nobel Peace Prize was offered this year to, of course, Al Gore and the U.N. study group, which shared it with him, dealing with global warming.

Global warming is here. For people to write, as some do—people who are so determined to say there is no global warming, that is a figment of their imagination. It is here. Why? Because of our gluttony for oil.

Earlier this year, the House and Senate both passed a landmark, comprehensive piece of energy legislation to tackle each prong of the energy crisis. If we can finalize this and help lower prices by reducing our dependence upon oil, we would be developing renewable fuel alternatives and punishing price gougers and begin to turn the tide of global warming.

The legislation we passed was bipartisan. It wasn't just a Democratic bill. We had Republican help. I am happy to see the Presiding Officer here today because no one in recent years has done more to focus on the problems with energy than the Senator from Washington, Senator CANTWELL. Because of the strength and conviction of the Senator from Washington, who was attacked personally in her last election campaign, because she was on the right side of the issue, it didn't affect her; in fact, it probably helped her.

We have to turn the tide of global warming. Remember, we use 21 million barrels of oil a day. By increasing our CAFE standards by 2020, we can save well over a million barrels a day, and some say even more.

In our legislation, we require an additional savings of 10 million barrels a day, on average, by 2030. We set an ambitious schedule to replace about one-fifth of our petroleum consumption with renewable fuels.

At the Nevada Test Site, where we set off approximately a thousand nuclear devices—most of them underground and a few above ground—you could cover that Nevada Test Site with solar panels today, with today's technology, and supply enough electricity for the whole country. It can be done. It is not being done because we have the utilities which, in most every place in the country, are regulated monopolies. They don't want to do it because it is easier to use fossil fuel. Natural gas is expensive, so now we have a mad rush to coal.

I so appreciate that Kansas and Oklahoma, in the last couple of weeks, said: No coal. This is the area we all need to look to, the States of Kansas and Oklahoma. We should look to them as role models because they have done the right thing.

We also need more cooperation from energy companies. The utilities aren't going to do it. Last year, oil companies brought in almost \$120 billion in profits. Yet they are doing nothing to help us. The automobile industry is doing nothing to help us. Certainly, the Bush-Cheney administration—the most energy-dependent administration in history—nobody has been closer to the oil industry than this administration. They both made their fortunes in oil.

Instead, though, lobbyists for the oil, auto, and coal industries are trying

their best to weaken our bill or stop its progress. In Nevada, I came out against the coal-fired plants they are pushing there. They are spending millions of dollars in the small State of Nevada to try to show I am wrong by opposing coal-fired plants, saying: We want to build a bridge to alternative energy. Let us build a few coal-fired plants and then we will do it.

That is a lost cause. They are doing that because it is the cheapest way to do it. They could build solar plants, wind, and geothermal for no more than what it cost to build these coal-fired plants. It would be as many construction jobs, but it would be something different. If it hasn't been done before, they don't want to do it. Imagine where we would be today if they agreed to join us in this fight. We know the administration simply had secret meetings and made sweetheart deals with the oil companies, and they refused to let the press know about it. The press went to court, and the court upheld the secrecy of the White House.

The time to stand in the way of progress should be long past. Since we passed the Energy bill on a bipartisan basis, Senate Republicans have stopped us from going to conference. We cannot stop. We need to continue to work with the House to pass a bill, despite these challenges. I hope and believe Democrats and Republicans will find common ground and set a new course that will keep us safe for our economy and protect our planet.

In the Senate, our bill had something the House bill didn't. It raises CAFE standards, a renewable portfolio. It seems we ought to be able to marry the two and agree to the demand of the American people.

Today's record oil prices alone should be enough to convince us we must act quickly to complete the Energy bill and pass it into law.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to a period for the transaction of morning business for 90 minutes, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with Senator BOXER controlling the first 60 minutes, and the last 30 minutes under the control of the Republicans.

The Senator from California.

GLOBAL WARMING

Mrs. BOXER. Madam President, I have been waiting to speak to the Senate to place in the RECORD the case that we have to make to take action to ease the impact of unfettered global